

The Sentiments of the Christian in pondering the birth of Christ

(Die Empfindungen des Christen beim Nachdenken über die Geburt Christi)

A sermon (outline) by Friedrich Schleiermacher, delivered on 25th December 1794.

ET: Frances Henderson

Source: Johannes Bauer, hg.v., *Ungedruckte Predigten Schleiermachers aus den Jahren 1820-1828: Mit Einleitungen und mit einem Anhang ungedruckter Briefe von Schleiermacher und Henriette Herz* (Leipzig: N.Heinsius Nachfolger, 1909), 82–3.

Luke 2: 14

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Introduction: The news is also professed by us in just such a way, that the renewed and solemn remembrance of it positively has to bring forth all sorts of sentiments.

Theme: The sentiments of the Christian in pondering the birth of Christ.

I. Sentiments towards God: Glory be to God in the Highest

1. Concerning the ultimate purpose – the universal Saviour;
 - a) an intensive universality,
 - α) the redemption of all evil.
 1. concerning the moral [sentiment?]
 2. concerning the too-strong sentiment of the physical;
 - β) the foundation to all the Good;
 - b) an extensive universality,
 - α) concerning the time
 - β) concerning the place and the circumstances
2. Concerning the remedy – the wise Saviour;
 - a) a natural salvation, coming from human nature
 - b) a miraculous salvation, coming from an inauspicious start.

II. Regulative Sentiments

1. Peace on Earth
 - a) Peace with heaven,
 - α) reconciliation,
 - β) unanimity in his purposes;
 - b) Peace between Christians as Christians,
 - α) toleration of differences,
 - β) grounding in the improvement of essentials;
 - c) Peace between Christians as citizens of the earth,
2. Goodwill between all men;
 - a) Goodwill concerning his revelation – through exacting reflection on the great wisdom, which lies therein,
 - b) Goodwill concerning his doctrine – (not only cold approval) , through exacting knowledge of their composition and their blessed operations,

c) Goodwill concerning his archetype – (not distant admiration), through the endeavour to imitate him.

Close: The endeavour of imitation must always be the capstone of all Christian sentiments.